CLARA BELLE'S SUNDAY TALK

Several Distinguished Women Give Reasons for Wishing They Were Men.

The Courtship and Marriage of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps—Why Prof. Charlier Closed His School for the Education of Girls.

Special to the Indianapolis Journal.

NEW YORK, Oct. 27.—Do all women desire to be men? If so, why? Everybody has heard often the remark by a woman, "I wish I were a man," but nobody can recall the uttered expression, "I am glad I am a woman." Doubtless the editor of the Journal would publish brief letters from his feminine readers on this subject, and I suggest that opinions be copiously sent him. In the meantime, I have seen three women who are running, respectively, for President of the United States, Governor of the State of New York, and Mayor of the city of New York, and have put to each the query, "Would you like to be a man?" Belva Lockwood has been, as you know, put forward by the Equal Rights party as their candidate for the presidency. She has established headquarters in this city, and is going through the motions of a serious campaign. She is in earnest. There is no doubt about that, no matter how much fun may be made of her.

"I suppose there is no woman on earth," she said, in reply to my question, "who hasn't many times said to herself, if not to others, 'I wish I were a man.' All the disabilities based on our sex are such as men are free from. Some of them are immovable, but we are seeking in this movement to get rid of the others. It isn't worth while to argue, that, polite as men are to women, we are still in bondage. In more ways than I could tell you in a day, or you could print in a hundred columns, women are made to be sorry that they are not men. Yes; I do, indeed, wish that I were a man."

Linda Gilbert is the Equal Rights party's candidate for Governor of this State. She is different from Belva Lockwood, in possessing a reputation as a philanthropist, and not as a woman's rights agitator. She has devoted herself, for many years, to prison reforms, and has become a sort of Florence Nightingale in those hospitals of the morally diseased. "Masculinity leads its possessors to prison," said Miss Gilbert. "That is to say, an average of nineteen in twenty convicts are men. That is certainly a misfortune which comes of being men. Nevertheless, I wish I were a man, and if I could be turned into one I would willingly take my chances of staying on the outside of the bars. No, no—don't laugh, I mean prison bars—not saloon bars. But that reminds me of one injustice under which women suffer. A man may stand up at a bar and drink in moderation without loss of good reputation. Doubtless such an indulgence ought to reflect upon him, but it doesn't to any extent. But if I were to walk into a saloon, and stand up at the bar like a man, it would be the last of me, socially. But that is a rather ignoble illustration. The penalties of being a woman are too numerous to admit of even generalization. The mission of the Equal Rights party is to abate some of these evils, but it can't be done in our life times, nor in our children's, and so I do selfishly wish that I were a man."

Cynthia Leonard is the candidate of the Equal Rights party for Mayor of New York. She is essentially different from both Belva Lockwood and Linda Gilbert, for she is an expounder of matrimonial doctrines which they do not countenance, and which could hardly be published here. She is intellectually a brilliant woman, however, and in that respect the equal of most men.

"Do I address our next Mayoress?" I asked.

"No, no, she quickly rejoined, "you address our next Mayor. The title to the office is masculine, and so—"

"Then, perhaps you'd like to be a man?"

"Indeed, would I. There is no reason why I shouldn't desire to be a man, and every reason why I should. Think of the advantages enjoyed by the other sex, while one of our own is doomed to be always negative, receptive, and in every respect secondary. That is what we are complaining of, and what we are setting out to reform. Do I wish I were a man? A thousand times, yes."

Frances Elizabeth Willard has been figuring handsomely in town during the week as president of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, whose convention has crowded the Metropolitan Opera-house.

"I am a Christian woman," she said to me, "and content to retain the sex which God gave to me. No doubt the wish is general among women that they were men. I admit that it is so, but I am not prepared to talk on a curious subject so suddenly propounded to me. I will only say that it is exceedingly advantageous to be a man."

J. Ellen Foster, the principal opponent of Miss Willard in the convention upon the question of permitting political discussion therein, repeated meditatively: "Do I wish I were a man? Well, yes. There is something to be said pro and con. Women are coddled, pampered, petted—they are, as a rule, relieved of the responsibilities of life,—but if man is thus compelled to go ahead, don't forget that woman is doomed to follow after. She is a slave of proprieties where he is free. Ah, yes! She has reason enough for her hopeless wish that she were a man."

Clara Belle herself wishes she were a man, and will take space to give only one reason. A fellow may hunt a wife, rich, cultured, beautiful, or whatever he particularly wishes. A girl must wait to be asked. In other words, he may seek happiness in matrimony, while she must take the chances of its coming to her. She may toss her head gaily as she sings the familiar milkmaid song, "Nobody asked you, sir, she said," but all the while she regrets that rigid custom forbids her asking him, no matter how much she wants to. Even leap year brings to her no equality of privilege in courtship. When she is advantageously attractive, and has constantly on hand matrimonial options from a dozen assorted men, she can't help but realize that while she may refuse that twelve offers, her big brother is at liberty to make a perfectly indefinite number of proposals. It is when she thinks of such things as that that she utters the complaint, "I wish I were a man."

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One lovely and illustrious old maid has become a wife. She is Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, the authoress of many exquisite religious books, one of which is the famous "Gates Ajar." She also wrote "Old Maids' Paradise," and was regarded by her friends as confirmed by choice in single blessedness. Marriage had certainly been optional with her ever since girlhood, but she habitually declared that she would never wed. Nevertheless, she is the bride of the Rev. Herbert D. Ward. There is a little story to tell about that. The bridegroom is the son of the Rev. Dr. William Hayes Ward, editor of the Independent. Last winter the senior Ward took up Miss Phelps's latest book carelessly as he sat in his sanctum, and glanced at one of its pages. He immediately became interested, and kept on reading, to the neglect of more important duties, until the time came for him to go home. He walked to the South ferry with his mind still absorbed in what he had read, and he was so distrait with it that, in crossing the crowded street to get to the ferry entrance, he allowed himself to be run over by a heavy truck and very badly injured; some of his ribs were broken, and for a day or two his life was considered in danger. The driver who had run him down was arrested, but Dr. Ward declared that no blame should be attached to him.

"It was altogether my own fault," he said. "My mind was engrossed with something else than taking care of my body, just then, or it wouldn't have happened.

When the season of outing came around, Dr. Ward was barely convalescing, and his son took him on a yachting cruise along Long Island sound. They stopped at Gloucester, Massachusetts, near which Miss Phelps has a summer residence, and the neighborhood of which she had not long before stirred up immensely by her story of "Jack," in which the people thereabouts were described, and not altogether agreeably. The Wards visited Miss Phelps, getting an introduction through a mutual friend, and at the earnest desire of Dr. Ward, who had become greatly interested in the authoress through a perusal of her works while recovering from the accident she had indirectly caused. All through the past summer the Wards hung about Gloucester, and it became apparent to observers that this was due to the son rather than to the father. Although the former was hardly thirty-five years old, and Elizabeth Stuart Phelps is something like fifty, their relations took on an unmistakable aspect of courtship. The result was a marriage ceremony at the Phelps seashore cottage, East Gloucester, a few days ago.

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I went away over to the Bowery to see a bride, yesterday, and I inspected her as closely as I could by passing and repassing the window of the place into which her husband had brought her. I could not decorously go in, although I saw members of my own sex doing so, for it was a groggery, and one of the worst of a bad kind. You have read of Steve Brodie, a pedestrian, a prize-fighter, and the first man to survive a drop from the height of the Brooklyn bridge into the river below. He is a tough specimen of New York humanity, morally and physically. Not long ago he opened a saloon in the lower part of the Bowery, and made it as attractive as he could to young men and girls of congenially vicious character. Brodie went to Rochester, awhile ago, to make the leap at Genesee Falls which killed Sam Patch. His feat captured the heart of a pretty girl, only fifteen years old, and a daughter of poor but entirely respectable parents. She eloped with her hero. The fatal exploit of Sam Patch had been so long a local tradition that the fellow who repeated it and remained alive seemed to her very glorious. He brought her to New York, her grieved parents followed, and he was arrested under the law which makes elopement with a girl under sixteen abduction; but upon his agreement to marry her, she was left with him after the ceremony. A Rochester friend had told me of her really remarkable beauty, of the careful home training which she had received, and of her unfortunate infatuation for Steve Brodie. So I went, as I have said, to look at her. The room was dark, dank and most unromantic. A dozen drinkers and loungers were in it. They were youthful loafers of both sexes. Behind the bar was the bride, alongside her ugly husband, and acting as a barmaid—a duty which she performs regularly, and which she seemed at this time to enjoy, for she was laughing and chatting merrily. Isn't this a queer instance of freakish feminine fancy in choosing a husband?

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Lelia Farrell, the burlesque actress who just missed becoming the wife of Nat Goodwin, and who threatened to prevent, by means of a lawsuit, his marriage to the girl for whom he had discarded her, is a very gay pedestrian in Broadway. Goodwin settled her claim, but by how large a payment of money has not been learned by outsiders; but if an estimate is to be formed upon the basis of her new autumn apparel, the amount must have been five or ten thousand dollars at least, or else she is not trying to make her income cover a great space of time. I have seen her out on four or five successive afternoons, and at the theater several evenings, and on no two occasions did she wear the same costume. The replenishment of her wardrobe has been ample and exceedingly gorgeous. She is a stylish young woman, not particularly beautiful, but vivacious, and evidently a capturer of beaux. She has a new one in the person of "Gus" Adams, a young fellow with enough inherited money with which to realize his idea of a gentleman of leisure. He couples himself with Lelia in Broadway, and is a companion exhibit in boxes at the theater.

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Of all the marriages that have failed to produce continued happiness, that of Mrs. Marie V. de Howe is just now notable, because she has procured a divorce this week from her husband. The Charlier Institute was for many years one of the foremost fashionable schools in town, patronized by wealthy families, who sent their daughters there for the most complete modern education. Professor Elie Charlier was its principal and owner. He was a fine example of the old-school gentleman in deportment, and the inculcation of maidenly modesty and decorum was a specialty of his. A course of lectures on polite deportment was a feature of the school, and in these lessons it was particularly sought to impress upon the pupils' minds the duty and desirability of suitable matrimony. It was calculated that the heiresses who went to the Charlier Institute got an impression of good sense as to the choice of husbands. Marie Charlier was the Professor's only daughter. He discovered, to his astonishment, that she had fallen in love with Haughwout Howe, a very brisk young beau, but with only the income that his employment as private secretary of Postmaster general Thomas L. James yielded. That was enough to support himself singly, but not adequate to a pretentious household, and he had no expectations of better fortune. Professor Charlier commanded his daughter to cease all acquaintance with Howe. She disobeyed him flagrantly by eloping with her lover. Charlier at once announced that the institute would close at the end of the term then current. His friends endeavored to disuade him, but he would not alter his purpose. He said that if his own daughter had proved a bad pupil, what could be expected of the other girls intrusted to his training? There was no indication that such a view would be taken of it by anybody else, but he could not be convinced. Not only did he insist upon going out of the business himself, but he declined all offers to purchase the establishment. His design of demolition was carried out, and the prosperous and celebrated Charlier Institute came to an end. The building was sold with the stipulation that it should not be used as a school for girls. It is now occupied, after several years of emptiness, by a Catholic scholastic institution for boys. Probably the daughter is now convinced that her father's teaching as to matrimonial alliances was sound. At all events, she has obtained freedom by a divorce.

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The oddest development of the promenade is the small pet dog, trained to hide himself singularly. The officials of the elevated railroads lately made a rule of exclusion against dogs, and they are no longer permitted aboard the trains. The rule is so rigidly enforced that the gatemen scrutinize the women, in quest of concealed dogs, about as closely as the custom-house officers do the returning transatlantic tourists for smuggled goods. Now, the dog I have mentioned is a moderate-sized French poodle. His mistress has taught him to sneak under her skirts when she gets nearly to the top of the stairway to the station, and thus screened from discovery he trots along with her right past the argus-eyed gate-keeper, and never comes out from his retreat until he is safe inside the car.

CLARA BELLE.

The Voice of the Oracles.

Philadelphia Press.

Come, let us consult the oracles of Democracy and learn from them where that party stands on the issue between protection and free-trade. Listen to their voices:

Col. Henry Watterson, of Kentucky, says: "The Democratic party is a free-trade party or it is nothing."

Senator Vest, of Missouri, says: "President Cleveland's message, for which I honor and admire him, is a declaration of war against the protected industries of the country and it is a fight to the death."

Senator Coke, of Texas, says: "If there is a thing which a Texan will go out of his way to kick and kill it is a protective tariff."

Ex-Senator McDonald, of Indiana, says: "I am firmly of the opinion that all protective tariffs are unconstitutional."

Representative Roger Q. Mills, of Texas, says: "I am for free trade and will never lend my support to any legislation to block the way to the attainment of that object."

Henry George, of New York, says: "I am for Cleveland because Cleveland is for free-trade."

The national Democratic platform says: "We indorse the President's message."

There is nothing vague or ambiguous in these utterances. They are brief, positive and right to the point. They come from eminent Democratic leaders, oracles of the party, whose position and experience entitle them to recognition as exponents of their party's faith. Their voice is for free-trade and the party is with them. To consider these utterances in connection with the history and conduct of the party they represent and then deny that the Democracy is a free-trade organization is to deny one's own intelligence and to impeach the sincerity and authority of the eminent Democratic leaders and oracles who have spoken so plainly.

Local Option in New Jersey.

New York Advocate.

The effect of the local-option election in Warren county, New Jersey, is said to have already made the keepers of rum-shops bankrupt. One has already made an assignment, and others are preparing to avail themselves of the bankrupt act. Which is better—to have rumsellers bankrupts and driven into legitimate business, or their customers bankrupts? It is a choice—rumsellers living in luxury and the people in poverty, or rumsellers and the people working and saving.

Citizens of St. Louis who were up early the other morning, saw a rare sight. Two big flocks of pelicans passed over the city on their way south. They flew so low that the pouch under the lower bill and throat of each could be seen. The first flock, numbering over 100, flew slowly and in almost an unbroken single line, crossing the river to the Illinois side and disappearing in the distance. The second flock, following close behind, seemed to have lost its way, and circled over the river for ten minutes, and then the leader suddenly started in a bee-line for the southeast and the rest trailed after him.

The following is from a Grass Lake (Mich.) daily: "Last Monday morning, while a small knot of men were talking together at the Central depot, in Jackson, the peep of a chicken was distinctly heard. Thereupon one of the number opened his vest, and in an inner pocket was revealed a chicken just hatched and still partly in its shell. He reported that he had carried an egg for twenty-one days on a $10 wager that it would hatch from the natural warmth of his body."

BANE OF ENGLISH WORKMEN

Free Trade Brings Them Into Competition with all the Rest of Europe.

The Free-Trade League and the Sentiment It Is Producing in Favor of an Import Tax —Opinions of Prominent Men.

Correspondence of the Indianapolis Journal.

MANCHESTER, Oct. 15.—The bane of the British workman is competition from abroad. The farm laborers suffer with the employing farmers from the low prices set by American wheat and meat, the coal and iron miners and workers have entered into a starving match with Belgium, and all kinds of small manufactures are invaded by the French, the Germans and the Americans. It is natural that the British workman and those who speak for him should seek for some means of restricting competition, and it is not strange that they should have hit upon the only practicable means known to them of doing this—a tariff.

The growth of protectionist sentiment in England is one of the most significant sequels of the storm and stress in the financial world. The Fair Trade League has the active aid or secret sympathy of some of the most powerful statesmen in England, and is especially strong with the farmers and with certain branches of trade and manufacture. The best means, probably, of showing what the fair-traders want and why they want it will be to quote for American readers the language of three representative Englishmen and of the editor of Fair Trade, the organ of the league.

The Sheffield Telegraph is second to no English paper outside of London in power, influence and circulation. Its outspoken advocacy of fair trade led me to call upon its editor, Sir W. C. Leng, for a chat on political subjects. Sir William, who is a typical Briton and a stanch Conservative, defined the object of the fair-trade movement to be to take the taxes off articles of necessity and place them on articles of luxury, to equalize the competition of home and foreign labor by a slight tax on imports where necessary, and to use the tax as a weapon to force British trade abroad.

The first two objects are familiar enough to all Americans, being practically the object of our own tariff laws. The bearing of the third Sir William illustrated by an instance so much to the point that I quote his words in full.

"Take for instance," said he, "the case of the Spanish wine duties. At one time Spain, being very much out of temper because of the English tariff, which was held to discriminate against Spanish wine in favor of French and German, resolved to vent her spite on all three countries by a hostile tariff on their goods. The tariff was adopted and was promptly met by France and Germany by threats of retaliation which fairly forced its repeal. England alone was so wedded to its no-tariff theories that it suffered the Spanish market to be lost to it rather than resort to the tariff as a weapon. Yet we had our knuckles in the neck cloths of these Spaniards, for we bought more than half of all their exports. We could have said to Spain, 'You send us luxuries, all of which we can get along without, and some of which we would undoubtedly be better without. We will put a tariff upon them;' we could have brought Spain to her senses. Importers with big interests in Spanish trade and exporters with equally big ones knew that retaliation was the only way to bring Spain to reason, and the stupidity, the mental mulishness of our rulers alone prevented its successful use.

"One of the most vexatious results of the free-trade policy is this: Quantities of the machinery made here in Yorkshire is exported to France and Germany, mills are put up, and trained and picked Yorkshire operatives, men with brains, are sent over to teach the foreigners to run them. Now, Yorkshire labor earned the money that bought those machines, Yorkshire labor gave the manufacturer the means to build the mills and hire the hands, and Yorkshire brains taught the foreigners how to go to work, and when Yorkshire men find their own earnings used thus to establish competition abroad to beat down their own wages they are apt to consider well a remedy such as an import tax would furnish. It is not in France and Germany alone that this is done. The jute manufactures in India, established with money earned by the weavers of Dundee, are competing with Dundee itself. Mr. Mundella, of Nottingham, builds his mills abroad and brings his German stockings in to lower the wages of Yorkshire knitters. This is all wrong.

"What we want to do is to take the tax off tea and coffee and put it on foreign satins and silks, and other luxuries, on manufactures which seriously compete with our own and on American wheat. We do not want a heavy tariff on your wheat. Some say two shillings and sixpence; for myself I should prefer five shillings (per quarter; say 10 to 14 per cent.) There is no doubt that American wheat would still come in. Where else can it go? No other country of any importance fails to raise its own. We have you absolutely at our mercy. The price of wheat would not be raised five shillings by a five-shilling import tax, for you would have to lower your prices to meet it, or lose your market. The political economists talk nonsense when they say that the consumer always pays the tariff. In fact, the consumer sometimes pays it, sometimes the producer and sometimes they share it. In the case of American wheat the tax would raise prices slightly, but the British farmer could then make both ends meet, and the British workman could well afford to pay more for his bread, because he would have a better home market reserved for him, and certainly no worse, probably a better, foreign market than now.

"Protection? No, sir! We do not want protection. We only want a small, a very small tax upon certain foreign products to offset the heavy odds under which the British producer labors by reason of the burdens of taxation, and to enable him to pay living wages."

And then Sir William denounced our American protection as robbery designed to make the rich richer and the poor poorer, and held up Mr. Carnegie as an awful warning of what might be accomplished in the former direction. But for the life of me I couldn't and still cannot see wherein fair trade is not precisely the same thing as protection and the import tax the same as a low protective tariff. The fact is, protection has got such a bad name in England through a half century of constant abuse that the fair-traders, though really mild protectionists, think it necessary to deny the fact with an energy which is sometimes amusing.

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I talked with Mr. E. Brandram Jones, the editor of Fair Trade, upon this matter while I was in London. To Mr. Jones I also remarked: "Fair trade is about the same thing as our protection, is it not?"

"Indeed it isn't," he responded with heat, almost with indignation. "What we want, and all that we want, is a slight import tax levied upon articles which come into most ruinous competition with British products. When we see our country sinking year by year deeper into ruin and misery, we think it about time to take the obvious means of checking the descent and putting Britain on its feet again. Wouldn't you?"

I asked Mr. Jones what the prospect of success was.

"We shall win," he replied with the utmost confidence. "At present Parliament and the country are occupied with litttle save the Irish question, but when that is out of the way fair trade must get some attention. Another thing that halts agitation and action alike is the suspense over the American election. Everybody in England is waiting to see how that will turn out. But the great Conservative party is practically ours already, and the Liberals must come to us, or suffer for refusing. Our leaders are men of character, education and birth. In harmony with our ideas are the land and labor organizations, with branches most numerous in the west of England, and many local clubs and organizations. We have a considerable showing of prominent newspapers; and we have the logic of facts on our side. Something must be done and done quickly if England is to be saved from worse ruin than has befallen us."

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These men are professed and pronounced advocates of fair trade. Mere representatives, probably, of the views of the average Englishman would be found in a conversation which I had with Mr. Horace Algar, the London agent of Ruston & Proctor, a great firm of Lincolnshire engineering machinists. Mr. Algar, to begin with, expressed the keenest interest in the result of our presidential election, and pressed me to tell him how it was going to "go," which, of course, I could not do. He had a grievance against America. While sending millions of our own produce to England every year we closed our gates against her goods. He thought some means should be devised to prevent this. Lincolnshire operatives were fed on American flour, but not one single machine could Ruston & Proctor sell in America because of the tariff (and because of the excellent inventive genius of American engineers. The dredges made by Ruston & Proctor for the Manchester ship-canal